

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6881

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MONTREAL UNN

AMCONSUL QUEBEC UNN

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EO 11652 NA

TAGS ELAB ILO CA

SUBJ CLC FILES COMPLAINT WITH ILO AGAINST QUEBEC

REFS QUEBEC 105; MONTREAL 1086

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS (CLC)
FILED FORMAL COMPLAINT WITH INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION
ACCUSING QUEBEC PROVINCE OF VIOLATING FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION
CONVENTION (87). MAJOR POINTS IN LENGTHY BRIEF TAKE ISSUE
WITH PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION THAT RESULTED FROM CLICHE
COMMISSION REPORT ON CORRUPTION IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
(QUEBEC 105 NOTAL), PARTICULARLY IMPOSITION OF TRUSTEESHIPS
OVER FOUR BUILDING TRADES UNIONS AND PROPOSAL TO BAR
PERSONS WITH CRIMINAL RECORD FROM HOLDING UNION OFFICE. CLC
ARGUES THAT THE TRUSTEESHIPS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN IMPOSED
"CONSTITUTE INTERFERENCE IN RIGHT OF TRADE UNIONS TO
ORGANIZE THEIR ADMINISTRATION AND ACTIVITIES FREE
FROM CONTROL OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES". CONCERNING THE
PROHIBITION OF CONVICTED CRIMINALS TO HOLD UNION OFFICE
CLC MAINTAINS THE LAW SHOULD BE LIMITED TO CONVICTIONS
OF CRIMES "THE NATURE OF WHICH COULD RENDER A PERSON
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SO CONVICTED CAPABLE OF ACTING IN MANNER PREJUDICIAL

TO PROPER EXERCISE OF TRADE UNION FUNCTIONS." END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. COMMENT: CLC'S DECISION TO CARRY THE RECENT CRACKDOWN BY QUEBEC AGAINST TRADE UNION CORRUPTION INTO THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA WAS UNDOUBTEDLY GOVERNED BY TWO DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. THE TRUSTEESHIP ISSUE, WHILE UNPALATABLE, IS OPPOSED MORE IN PRINCIPLE THAN IN THE FOUR INSTANCES WHERE IT WAS ACTUALLY IMPOSED. FURTHERMORE, CLC HOPES TO OBTAIN GREATER FOCUS BY THE US BASED UNION HEAD-QUARTERS ON THEIR ERRANT CANADIAN AFFILIATES. THE PROHIBITION OF CONVICTED CRIMINALS TO HOLD UNION OFFICE AS VIOLATION OF ILO CONVENTION 87 CITED BY CLC RELATES DIRECTLY TO THE THREE YEAR PENITENTIARY TERM TO WHICH QUEBEC FEDERATION OF LABOR PRESIDENT LOUIS LABERGE WAS SENTENCED ON JUNE 20 (SEE MONTREAL 1086 NOTAL) FOR HAVING INCITED WORKERS TO RIOT DURING A 1974 STRIKE. CLC PUBLICLY CONDEMNED THE SENTENCE NOTING THAT "FIERY RHETORIC IS RULE RATHER THAN EXCEPTION IN QUEBEC PUBLIC LIFE". IF LABERGE'S CONVICTION IS UPHELD UPON APPEAL HE WOULD BE BARRED FROM UNION OFFICE FOR FIVE YEARS AFTER COMPLETION OF SENTENCE.
PORTER

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